



U.S. Department of Justice

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For Immediate Release

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BUCKS COUNTY MAN AND FIVE OTHERS CHARGED IN ASYLUM SCAM

Phony lawyer raked in \$3 million in fees from fraudulent applicants

PHILADELPHIA - Acting United States Attorney Laurie Magid today announced the filing of an indictment¹ charging David Lynn, Yevgeny Zemlyansky, Ilya Zherelyev, Anatoly Zagrinichny, Akbar Kadirov, and Nelly Katsman with operating a fraudulent business that filed at least 380 bogus asylum applications for clients between January 2003 and March 2007. Joining Magid in today's announcement were John Kelleghan, special agent-in-charge for the United States Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Labor Special Agent-in-Charge Bill Turpin, Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent-in-Charge Janice Fedarcyk, and Cary Rubenstein, special agent-in-charge for the Office of Inspector General for Housing and Urban Development.

Federal immigration law permits individuals who have suffered persecution or will be persecuted upon return to their homeland because of race, religion, political opinion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group to apply for asylum in the United States. According to the indictment, the defendants assisted clients in making false claims of persecution to immigration authorities in order to get asylum. Lynn's business prepared and filed these fraudulent applications. He guaranteed his clients that he could lawfully obtain permanent residency status for them. For this service, Lynn charged a fee of up to \$8,000 for an individual, and up to \$12,000 for a family, receiving at least \$3 million in proceeds from the fraudulent asylum business. Lynn disguised his phony asylum business, calling it a translation service and falsely claiming he was a lawyer.

¹An indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The other defendants played various roles in Lynn's business, completing bogus applications for asylum to submit to immigration authorities, driving clients to immigration interviews and proceedings, collecting and laundering the proceeds of the scheme, and coaching clients on how to falsely claim persecution. As the indictment alleges, the defendants simply made up claims of persecution for clients, falsely stating that clients had been persecuted for practicing the Baptist and Jehovah's Witness religions, for being homosexual, and for being a Gypsy.

Because the business was so lucrative for the defendants, they went to great lengths to conceal the proceeds of the scheme, depositing the money in Lynn's Swiss bank accounts, keeping it in safety deposit boxes, purchasing real estate, cashing checks at check cashing agencies, and insisting that clients pay the defendants in cash. Defendant Lynn even stored more than \$500,000 in cash proceeds in a safe hidden under the floor in his basement, which federal agents recovered during the execution of a search warrant.

"The asylum system is designed to permit those subject to real persecution, violence, and oppression in their homeland an opportunity to reside peacefully in the United States. These defendants exploited the asylum system out of pure greed, amassing millions of dollars by clogging the system with fraudulent applications," Magid said. "Such conduct undermines the system and hampers the timely consideration of legitimate applications."

"Defrauding our country's immigration system by filing bogus applications for benefits will not be tolerated," said Kelleghan. "America opens its doors to those who have suffered persecution, and actions like these simply tie up the system for those truly in need. ICE will aggressively investigate anyone seeking to exploit and compromise the integrity of our nation's immigration system for profit."

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR DATE OF BIRTH
David Lynn	Holland, PA	33
Yevgeny Zemlyansky	Feasterville, PA	61
Ilya Zherelyev	Philadelphia, PA	46
Anatoly Zagrinichny	Philadelphia, PA	62
Akbar Kadirov	Philadelphia, PA	54
Nelly Katsman	Holland, PA	41

INFORMATION REGARDING THE CHARGES

NAME	CHARGES
David Lynn	Conspiracy - 1 count Visa/Asylum fraud - 1 count Money Laundering - 1 count Conspiracy to commit money laundering - 1 count
Yevgeny Zemlyansky	Conspiracy - 1 count Visa/Asylum fraud - 3 counts Money Laundering - 2 counts Conspiracy to commit money laundering - 1 count False statement to a government agency - 3 counts
Ilya Zherelyev	Conspiracy - 1 count Visa/Asylum fraud - 1 count Money Laundering - 1 count Conspiracy to commit money laundering - 1 count Failure to appear for a court hearing - 1 count
Anatoly Zagrinichny	Conspiracy - 1 count Visa/Asylum fraud - 1 count False statement to a government agency - 1 count
Akbar Kadirov	Conspiracy - 1 count Visa/Asylum fraud - 1 count Conspiracy to commit money laundering - 1 count
Nelly Katsman	Conspiracy - 1 count Visa/Asylum fraud - 1 count

If convicted of all charges, the individual defendants face maximum possible sentences as follows:

David Lynn – 65 years imprisonment; \$1.5 million fine;
Yevgeny Zemlyansky – 100 years imprisonment; \$2.75 million fine;
Ilya Zherelyev – 75 years imprisonment; \$1.75 million fine;
Anatoly Zagrinichny – 30 years imprisonment; \$750,000 fine;
Akbar Kadirov – 45 years imprisonment; \$1 million fine; and
Nelly Katsman – 25 years imprisonment; \$500,000 fine.

July 29, 2008
Page 4

The case was investigated by the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the United States Department of Labor Office of Inspector General's Office of Labor Racketeering and Fraud, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Office of Inspector General for Housing and Urban Development; with support from the Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Fraud Detection and National Security, Department of State Diplomatic Security Services, the Northampton Township Police Department, and the Upper Southampton Township police.

It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Terri A. Marinari.

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